

SOUTHEND CITY YOUTH COUNCIL

Constitutional Arrangements

Agreed by Southend City Youth Council



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SECTION 1

AIMS

The aim of the Southend Youth Council is to provide a voice for young people at a level to forge links and facilitate dialogue between young people and decision makers. Our mission statement outlines youth councils current state and ability, whilst the vision statement outlines what members would like youth council's future aims and abilities should be in 5 years. This should be reviewed and re-done within 5 years:

Mission Statement: A place where young people can influence and learn about their community. It is a safe space where ideas can flow freely without judgement.

Vision Statement: To be a group of young people that have a huge impact on the city of Southend. A place of continuing support for young people where all voices are heard and acted upon to improve youth lives in the city of Southend.

SECTION 2

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE COUNCIL

Youth Council meetings are Chaired by the Youth Mayor or by the Deputy Youth Mayor in their absence. The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor are the only elected representatives of all young people in Southend.

A Southend Youth Council badge can be given to a member after attending no less than 3 meetings.

Youth Council Members are not elected and membership is open to all young people aged 11-18 who either live or are educated in Southend. However, on becoming Youth Council Members, they are considered to be representative of the young people of Southend and are expected to attend Youth Council meetings and on a regular basis and regularly participate.

SECTION 3

ELECTED ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Category A

- I. Youth Council members can only hold one elected role at a time, i.e. Youth Mayor, Deputy Youth Mayor or MYP.
- II. To run for Youth Mayor/Deputy, the youth council member must be a member for a minimum 3 months, and be year 9 or above.
- III. All category A roles are expected to attend all meetings unless a viable excuse is given and if an officer consistently misses meetings then they will be evaluated on suitability for an officer role

(3A) Youth Mayor

- I. A democratic election will be held at meetings of the Youth Council on a yearly basis, and the person with the most votes by a simple majority is appointed Youth Mayor.
- II. Qualities: Adaptability, supportive, organised, self-disciplined, have time available, reliable, assertive when required and committed.
- III. Role of Youth Mayor: Chair Youth Council meetings, supervise Youth Council appointments, formulate agenda.
- IV. Youth Mayor is to chair officer meetings.
- V. Youth Mayor is expected to put in 8 hours of independent work a month

(3B) Deputy Youth Mayor

- I. The person with the highest number of votes by a simple majority is appointed Deputy Youth Mayor at the meeting following the election of a new Youth Mayor.
- II. The Deputy Youth Mayor is required to undertake work delegated by the Youth Mayor. This would include Chairing Youth Council meetings.
- III. Qualities: Adaptability, supportive, organised, self-disciplined, have time available, assertive when required, reliable and committed.
- IV. Role Deputy Youth Mayor: Help chair Youth Council meetings, help supervise Youth Council appointments, help formulate agenda, formulate minutes from monthly meetings.
- V. Deputy Youth Mayor is expected to put in 8 hours of independent work a month

(3C) Member of Youth Parliament

- I. The MYP is elected every two years and is required to attend NYA conventions and UKYP events and debates. They will deliver the aims and objectives set out by the UK Youth Parliament on a local and national level.
- II. Qualities: Adaptability, supportive, organised, self-disciplined, have time available, reliable and committed.
- III. Role: Attend UKYP events, Youth council events and represent Southend locally and nationally, work with MPs for Southend East and West, holds Youth Council elections.
- IV. If the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor cannot attend the meeting, the MYP takes charge of the meeting.
- V. Member of Youth Parliament is expected to put in 8 hours of independent work a month

(3D) Accountability

- I. The Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor have a duty to be accountable to the people who elected them. If the Southend Youth Council Members feel the Youth Mayor and / or Deputy Youth Mayor is not fulfilling their duties, as outlined under the Areas of Responsibility (3A and 3B), they have the right to call a vote of no confidence. This can only be called following the outlined terms:
- II. At least 25% of a Youth Council meeting must write, including a petition with signatures, to the Youth Council Workers detailing their grounds for concern.
- III. The Youth Council Workers will call a vote of no confidence in either the Youth Mayor or Deputy Youth Mayor at the next Youth Council meeting. At this meeting both sides will be given five minutes to put their case.
- IV. All Youth Council members present will be able to vote in a secret ballot.
- V. A simple majority is required for the motion of no confidence to be passed.
- VI. If the motion is passed a new Youth Mayor and / or Deputy Youth Mayor must be elected at the earliest possible opportunity.
- VII. This may be done twice within any one mayoral term only.

(3D) Category A Roles to Corresponding Cabinet Members

Southend City Youth Council Category A Role	Cabinet Member
Youth Mayor	Cabinet member for children learning and SEND
Deputy Youth Mayor	Deputy Leader
Member of Youth parliament	The Leader

SECTION 4

OTHER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Category B

- I. Youth Council Members who are not in a category A role may hold up to two category B roles; these are Cultural Development Officer, Community Safety Officer, Health and Wellbeing, Environmental Officer, Finance Officer, Community Engagement officers. All roles are elected annually.
- II. If nobody wishes to stand for election, the role may remain unfilled until a youth council member wishes to stand. There must be reminders of unfilled roles for new members.
- III. To run for a category B role, the youth council member must be a member for a minimum of 3 months.
- IV. All category B roles are expected to attend all meetings unless a viable excuse is given and if an officer consistently misses meetings, they will be evaluated on suitability for an officer role

(4a) Co-Cultural development officer

- I. The Officer for Cultural Development ensures Southend is a positive, friendly, and inclusive place for young people. They promote cultural engagement by encouraging youth input into festivals, events, and initiatives across the city.
- II. Expected to put in 4 hours of independent work a Month
- III. Key responsibilities:
 - a. Involve young people in festivals and events.
 - b. Run events and create information packs for young people.
 - c. Foster inclusivity within the Youth Council, ensuring respect for diverse groups such as LGBTQ+ youth.
 - d. Represent the Youth Council at major events (e.g., City Day, Southend Pride).
 - e. Promote and raise awareness of regional events and campaigns (e.g., Earth Day, International Women's Day, BLM awareness weeks).

(4b) Community Safety Officer

- I. The Officer for Community Safety is responsible for providing opportunities for young people to develop, personal skills such as first aid and self-defense training. They ensure young people are informed about how to stay safe in their city and communities, promote wellbeing and security, and work closely with the police, British Transport Police, and community safety bodies.
- II. Expected to put in 4 hours of independent work a Month
- III. Key responsibilities:
 - a. Organise opportunities for skill development (e.g., first aid, self-defense).
 - b. Raise awareness of community safety through resources such as posters.

- c. Promote wellbeing and security among young people.
- d. Collaborate with local policing and community safety partners.
- e. Represent the Youth Council in the following:
 - i. VVU Community Funding Panel
 - ii. VVU Listening Project
 - iii. Youth Independent Advisory Group (Essex Police)

(4c) Health and Wellbeing Officer

- I. The Officer for Health and Wellbeing is responsible for projects and training aimed at improving and promoting the health and wellbeing of young people, including their mental health. They deliver this through information packs (e.g., neurodivergent pack) and events that focus on creative expression, physical improvement and fitness. Individual members can choose what aspects of the role to focus on during their term.
- II. Expected to put in 4 hours of independent work a Month
- III. Key responsibilities:
- IV. Develop and share information packs on health and wellbeing topics.
 - a. Organise events that encourage creative expression and physical fitness.
 - b. Promote mental health awareness and general wellbeing among young people.
 - c. Identify and lead on specific focus areas of the role based on personal interest, this should align to the priorities of the wider Youth Council.

(4d) Environmental Officer

- I. The Officer for the Environment is responsible for all projects relating to Southend's environment, including natural areas like greenery and visual concerns such as dirty or unattractive spaces and vandalism (e.g., graffiti). They ensure their work considers both the physical and human environment and assess the impact of Youth Council projects on the local area.
- II. Expected to put in 4 hours of independent work a Month
- III. Key responsibilities:
 - a. Organise regular beach and park cleans.
 - b. Raise awareness about environmental issues among young people.
 - c. Assess the environmental impact of Youth Council projects and suggest improvements.
 - d. Ensure work addresses both physical and human aspects of the environment.

(4e) Co-Community Engagement Officer

- I. The Officer for Community Engagement is responsible for the Youth Council's outreach, including press, website, and communication with schools via Youth Council Champions. They ensure all work, projects, and meetings are documented and regularly update the website and social media accounts. They promote communication with organisations and young people across Southend, including both school-based and homeschooled youth, and work to secure attendance at Youth Council events. They also support campaigns and awareness through social media, including environmental, cultural, and health events.
- II. Expected to put in 4 hours of independent work a Month
- III. Key responsibilities:
 - a. Work with MYP to coordinate outreach for UK Parliament Week (November) and develop the strategy for Make Your Mark.
 - b. Update website and social media channels in collaboration with the Task & Finish Group.
 - c. Maintain communication with schools and Youth Council Champions.
 - d. Promote Youth Council events and secure attendance from relevant stakeholders.
 - e. Create social media content for awareness weeks and special events (e.g., Earth Day, half marathons).

(4e) Finance Officer

- I. The Officer for Finance is responsible for fundraising for both Youth Council events and supported charities. They manage the Youth Council's budget through spending spreadsheets, purchase necessary equipment, and provide financial education to young people in Southend, for example through finance campaigns and events.
- II. Expected to put in 4 hours of independent work a Month
- III. Key responsibilities:
 - a. Fundraise for Youth Council events and supported charities.
 - b. Manage the Youth Council budget and spending spreadsheets.
 - c. Purchase necessary items such as snacks and event equipment.
 - d. Provide financial education to young people through campaigns and events.

(4f) Category B Roles to Corresponding Cabinet members

Southend City Youth Council Category B Role	Cabinet Member
Cultural Development Officers	Cabinet Member for Business, Culture, Music and Tourism
Community Safety Officer	Cabinet Member for Capital Projects & Public Protection
Health and Wellbeing	Cabinet Member for Social Care and Healthier Communities
Environmental Officer	Cabinet Member for Civic Pride
Finance Officer	Cabinet Member for Finance & Transport
Community Engagement Officers	Cabinet Member for Children and SEND

SECTION 5

ARRANGEMENTS

- I. All officers are expected to support the planning and delivery of the Make Your Mark campaign and all other campaigns in their area of expertise - supporting our communication with schools, managing targets, increasing participation and maintaining momentum to ensure last year's target is met.

Accountability

- II. Elected Officers have a duty to be accountable to the people who elected them. If the Southend Youth Council Members feel an Officer is not fulfilling their duties, as outlined in the role descriptions above, they have the right to call a vote of no confidence. This can only be called by following the outlined terms:
 1. At least 25% of the Youth Council meeting must write, including a petition with signatures, to the Youth Council Worker detailing their grounds for concern.
 2. The Youth Council Worker will call a vote of no confidence in an officer at the next Youth Council meeting. At this meeting both sides will be given five minutes to put their case.
 3. All Youth Council members present will be able to vote in a secret ballot.
 4. A simple majority is required for the motion of no confidence to be passed.
 5. If the motion is passed a new Officer must be elected at the earliest possible opportunity.

(5B) Any Other Business

- I. Members of the Southend Youth Council can move a motion at the end of a monthly meeting. Topics like a vote of no confidence, formation of new roles or formation of new committees can be raised, for example.
- II. This can be carried through with the Youth Council's consent, granted there are no objections. Any other business is integrated into the end of every agenda if someone has something to raise that hasn't been discussed in the meeting and would be of interest for the Youth Council. A vote, if appropriate, can be held if a matter needs to be passed as soon as possible or it isn't a major change. In most cases, votes will take place in the next monthly meeting. Votes are not to be done by a ballot but by a show of hands. A simple majority is required to pass 'any other business' subjects.
- III. If a project hasn't been voted on by a whole present Southend Youth Council, it is at the Chair's discretion whether another vote is necessary to renew the need for a certain project or committee.

(5C) Youth Council Meetings

- I. Full Youth Council Meetings will take place on the first Wednesday of every month and will last no more than two hours. Meetings will usually take place in the Council Chamber at the Civic Centre. Attendance at Youth Council Meetings is expected by all members and apologies should be sent in advance to youthmayor@southend.gov.uk.
- II. Youth Council Meetings will be attended by Youth Council members only and supported by the Youth Council Worker. If anyone else wishes to attend, a request must be made in advance to the Youth Mayor.
- III. The Youth Mayor and Deputy Mayor will be responsible for approving applications, invitation to attend or formally declining the application.

(5D) Youth Council Worker

- I. The Youth Council Worker and their team attend meetings in their capacity as Support Workers to the Youth Council. They will only contribute to debates if invited to do so by the Deputy Youth Mayor.

(5E) The Agenda

- I. If people want to attend a meeting, their request should be directed to the Youth Council Worker who will respond on behalf of the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor.
- II. If anyone wants to raise a point, they can have it included in the agenda.

(5F) Permanently Invited Guests

The following adults or their representatives have permanently invited guest status:

- Youth Voice Workers
- Head of Children's' Transformation and Principal Social Worker Executive
- Director Children and Public Health
- Various Councilors (up to 3 per meeting in accordance with The Compact)

(5G) Other Formal Meeting

The Youth Council is expected to take an interest in the work of other partnerships and formal meetings and, when possible, send representation. Youth Council Members may be invited by the Mayor for the Mayor's events amongst other organised events.

(5H) Agreed Elected & Approved Representatives

Information about elected people and roles will be presented on the Youth Council website and agenda.

(5I) Voting at Youth Council Meetings

- I. If a vote is required to agree to a proposal, then a 'one member, one vote' simple majority system shall operate. Only those present may vote.
- II. If there is a vote of 5 people or less, the vote can be sent to other members to agree or disagree at either an Officers' Meeting or future Youth Council Meeting.
- III. Either the Youth Mayor or the Deputy Youth Mayor or the MYP needs to be in attendance at each Youth Council meeting.
- IV. Youth Council Members can vote from their third meeting onwards.

(5J) Changes to the Constitution

Changes to the Constitution must be endorsed by the Youth Mayor and Deputy Youth Mayor

The Youth Council's Constitution was Amended and Adopted by the Youth Council on 2nd April 2026, witnessed by: Noah William Murphy-Brown, Youth Mayor & Isla Jane Bridge, Deputy Youth Mayor.